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SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

25 September 1952

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 274

SUBJECT: Ground Casualties in Recent Korean Fighting

1. Ground action in Korea over the past 6 to 8 weeks has been characterized by intensive Communist efforts to win and hold terrain features at several points along the line of contact. Without reference to the broader problem of the cost to either side of prolonged hostilities in Korea, the question has been raised whether the Communists may have adopted a policy of conducting intensive, small-unit attacks with the object of inflicting, over a prolonged period, heavy attrition on UN manpower. The following figures on UN and Communist casualties have been compiled from the daily CINCFE Situation Reports and the daily Far East Telecon. UN and Communist non-battle casualties are not included.

Ground Casualties in Korea for Period
24 August -- 21 September

	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action	Missing in Action	Total Casualties
US	289	1406	238	1933
ROK	596	1836	63	2195
Sub Total	885	3242	301	4428
Communists	6,777	7009	78	13,564

* Figures for 15 September were not available.

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2. The figures indicate that total Communist casualties were roughly three times those of the UN during this period. However, the number of Communists killed in action was over 7 times the number of UN killed. Since a much larger proportion of UN wounded may be expected to return to duty the relative attrition of the two forces in these actions has been between 3 and 7 to 1 in favor of the UN. We doubt that the Communists would consider such a rate favorable to them.

3. It is more likely that the recent local attacks by the Communists have been in the nature of "spoiling" attacks to fore-stall anticipated UN offensive action; the Communist ground action may also be a reaction to the increased UN air effort.

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